



# JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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With the end of summer your editor returns to his post at Columbia. It has been a wonderful sabbatical year, and living with young Johnson in the early part of the 18th century has been just as rewarding as we had hoped. But it is pleasant, too, to get back home to Philosophy Hall, even to the dissertations that lie in wait.

Trying to keep the *JNL* going while we were living in another age has not been easy, so that you have been fed with long waits and constant apologies. Nevertheless, you have been patient and long-suffering. For this we send heartfelt thanks. And we hope soon to mend our ways.

In this issue will be found some items which should have been included in the May number but which were forced out at the last minute because of lack of space. Undoubtedly much has been missed. Please point out the omissions and let us have the corrections, along with any comments, news items, queries which you may think worth passing on. Only with your help can the *JNL* be kept really worth while.

## Johnson and Stourbridge

As all of you will remember, Johnson in the year 1726 spent some time at the King Edward VI School in Stourbridge in Worcestershire. But exactly what his position at the school was has never been entirely clear. Was he merely an advanced student under John Wentworth, the Headmaster, or did he help with the younger boys and in this way receive free tuition? Unfortunately for twentieth-century scholars there were no records at the school to settle the question. There were rumors of a mysterious black box reputed

once to have held all the old records, but it had long since vanished. That was the situation when suddenly last year the black box, together with three more boxes and two folio volumes, came to light in an attorney's office in Stourbridge. At last, it was hoped, we would know more about Johnson's stay in Stourbridge.

But when G.H.C. Burley, the present History Master, studied the new-found records, he was brought up hard with a shock. Hardly a single document had to do with the first part of the 18th century. Moreover, still missing was the original Charter of 1552 and the other important papers. With the aid of Geoffrey Beard, one of his former pupils, Burley has been scouring the countryside in search of the missing material. It was particularly galling not to have the documents available for the celebration in July of the 400th anniversary of the granting of the royal charter. An account of this celebration, by the way, has been sent to us from the Stourbridge *County Express* of July 19.

How may one account for the big gap in the school papers? One theory is that the missing material was taken away by Wentworth, who was dismissed by the governors in 1732. Wentworth refused to go, continued to live in the Headmaster's house, and drew a salary until his death nine years later. During that time he was engaged in a protracted legal dispute with the authorities, though no evidence of any actual court action has yet been found. Certainly it is possible that in order to prepare his case Wentworth seized all the school records relating to his own headmastership, as well as the charter itself. But where are Wentworth's family papers? Your editor has searched — so have Burley and Beard — with no success. So we pass on the problem to *JNL* readers, hoping for some advice and help.

### Boswell Notes

The *New York Times* of August 20 carried the announcement that the theatrical rights to *Boswell's London Journal* have been acquired from McGraw-Hill by Baldwin Bergersen and Irvin Graham, who intend to convert the book into a musical play. Bergersen will do the score and Graham the lyrics. The adapter has not yet been named.

*Boswell in Holland* has been well received in England. It is called in *John O'London's* "a model of editorial composition... a ruby among books"; in the *Birmingham Post* "a delightful dish,

tastily prepared and most tastefully served." The *Manchester Guardian* insists that Boswell "comes out of this book a bigger man than he did out of the *London Journal*" though Lord David Cecil in *The Observer* finds him the "same extraordinary and fascinating phenomenon that enthralled us in the smoother pages" of the earlier work.

The Augustan Reprint Society has issued a facsimile of *Critical Strictures on the New Tragedy of Elvira, Written by Mr. David Malloch* (1763), written by Boswell, Andrew Erskine, and George Dempster. Fred Pottle has provided an excellent Introduction. Thus one of the rarest of Boswell's productions is now made available to a wider audience.

So far, we have only seen the publisher's advertisement of H. Allen Smith's humorous take-off of the *London Journal*. Entitled *Smith's London Journal*, it will be published by Doubleday and Co. late in September. Obviously it is an elaborate spoof which we look forward to reading.

An article to be mentioned is R. A. Leigh's "Boswell and Rousseau," in *MLR* for July.

### Some Recent Deaths

We lament the death of George R. Noyes, Dean of American Dryden scholars. Shortly after completing his admirable edition of the Poetical Works of Dryden, which appeared in 1909, he shifted to Slavonic studies, and spent the rest of his life in that field. Nevertheless, his interest in Restoration literature never waned, and he kept abreast of modern research. The revision of his earlier edition is a model of synthesis, embodying the important work of four generations. Yet for most English scholars he was only a name. At an M.L.A. meeting in Chicago about ten years ago he was unrecognized at the meeting of the late 17th century group, but the Poles of the city gave a banquet in his honor.

John E. Hodgson, who died last April, was an ardent Johnsonian. A member of the famous firm of book auctioneers in Chancery Lane, he belonged to the Johnson Club, and was one of the founders of the Johnson Society of London. He will be greatly missed by a wide circle of friends.

The sudden death of Donald Stauffer (Princeton) came as a tremendous shock to all of us. Last fall in Oxford he had seemed in perfect health, full of energy and zest for literature. While in

recent years his publications had covered many fields, he always retained his early interest in the 18th century. It is difficult to think that he is gone.

### Miscellaneous News Items

From Jim Osborn comes a newspaper clipping telling of the threatened destruction of Milbourne House, overlooking Barnes Pond in Barnes Village, Surrey, which was the home of Henry Fielding from 1750 to 1752. According to tradition some at least of *Amelia*, his last novel, was written there. The oldest house in the village, it was about to be pulled down as part of a Council housing scheme, but at the last minute it was saved by a Preservation Order from the Ministry of Town and Country Planning.

On Saturday, July 12, R.W. Chapman broadcast over the B.B.C. Third Program a description of the great Walpole collection of W.S. Lewis at Farmington, Conn.

J.Jean Hecht (Smith College) writes: "It occurs to me that you might wish to call to the attention of the readers of the *Johnsonian News Letter* the existence of the 'Conference on British Studies.' Formed last November for the purpose of promoting the study of British History, it will meet twice each year - autumn and spring - at New York University. The annual dues are one dollar." The President is Harold Hulme of N.Y.U.; the Secretary, Ruth Emery of Rutgers.

At Sotheby's on July 15th was sold a large collection of manuscripts connected with Sheridan and his family. Included were 110 letters from Sheridan to his partner at Drury Lane, John Grubbe, having to do with financing and the production of plays. The collection was bought by Maggs for £420. In another batch there were many manuscript poems and letters of various members of his family. In the same sale were autograph letters of such 18th-century celebrities as Bolingbroke, Dr. Arbuthnot, Reynolds.

We welcome to our country John Butt (University of Newcastle), General Editor of the Twickenham Pope, who is to be visiting professor at U.C.L.A. this fall. Mrs. Butt accompanies him for the first two months. We understand that Basil Willey (Cambridge) is to be at Cornell for one term this year.

So many of our members will be abroad this year, on various research projects, that any list which we may attempt is certain to be only partial. But we will name a few. Maynard Mack (Yale)

will be most of the year in Rome (address, Care of the American Academy, Via Angelo Masina 5). Louis Landa (Princeton) has a house in Oxford but will also be lecturing at London University. Bill Todd (Salem), engaged in bibliographical research, is also attached to London University. George Sherburn (now living in Middlebury, Vermont) will be in England part of the autumn. The Clarendon Press is about to begin work on his long-awaited edition of Pope's letters. In a roundabout way we hear word of R.H. Griffith, who has been at Oxford.

Apologies are due to Bill Wimsatt for a slip in our last number where we casually referred to his inclusion of "selections" from the *Peri Bathous* in his Rinehart edition of Pope. The entire text is given — apparently the first printing since Elwin and Courthope. As he succinctly puts it, "There are no fragments in my edition of Pope."

In the *New York Times* for July 30 was included a new type of perpetual calendar — from 1753 to 2059 — somewhat simpler than others in the past. But unfortunately it will be of no use to those of us who are working in the first half of the eighteenth century.

We hope you saw Joseph Wood Krutch's discussion of the revival of interest in the eighteenth century in the *New York Times* Book Review for August 31. He was writing in the "Speaking of Books" section, but the whole page, with the prose and poetry selections from Swift, Goldsmith, Walpole, Boswell and Johnson, was given over to our period.

We hear that Philip Gove has become General Editor of the Merriam Webster Dictionary.

Ronald Crane is to be Visiting Professor at Cornell University for the fall term.

Piozzians may be interested to know that the house in Hanover Square which the Piozzis occupied on their return from the Continent is still standing. Mary Hyde sends on the information, which she has secured from Lindsay Fleming in London. The proof comes in a letter of G.E. Osborn, Archivist of the City of Westminster Public Library, who writes that the rate payer for No. 2 Hanover Square for the years in question was Gabriel Piozzi. A comparison of old and recent plans of the Square shows also that the present No. 2 stands just as it did in the 18th century. Whether the houses are the same is another matter. When the Piozzis had the

house it was rated rather lower than others in the Square, but later increased its rateable value considerably. This might mean that additions were made, or even that it was rebuilt on a larger scale. But the probabilities are that the main fabric is the same as in Mrs. Piozzi's time.

### New Books

The latest in Farrar, Straus and Young's Great Letters Series, under the general editorship of Louis Kronenberger, is *The Selected Letters of Thomas Gray*. Joseph Wood Krutch is responsible for the selection and has provided a shrewd and delightful Introduction. After all these years there is little new one may add about Gray's skill as a correspondent. For connoisseurs of the art, he will always have a place in the front rank; but it is doubtful if he will ever be very popular with the proverbial general reader. If any short selection can make him so, the present volume ought to do the trick.

We doubt if many people have ever thought of Richard Steele as a poet. His reputation rests solidly on his essays and plays. Yet he was also a writer of graceful occasional verses, which are far from negligible. Rae Blanchard (Goucher) has gathered them all together, adding a few new attributions as she went along, and published them as *The Occasional Verse of Richard Steele* (Clarendon Press). Many of the poems provide interesting biographical sidelights, and altogether open up a new chapter in the life of "Dick" Steele.

Richmond P. Bond's (N.C.) *Queen Anne's American Kings* (Clarendon) has just reached us and we have only had time to skim through its pages. It is the complete story of the visit of the four Indian Sachems to London in 1710. They caused a sensation, of course, and were widely discussed in the coffee houses and salons. Now Bond brings together all the evidence about these "noble savages" and their English admirers.

For those who are willing to take their classics in condensed versions there is the new *Portable Gibbon* (Viking) - with the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* trimmed down from some 1,400,000 words to close to 200,000. The work has been done by Dero A. Saunders, one of the editors of *Fortune*, and *Time* insists the trimming has been done "without scalping it of all meaning." We

admit that we haven't checked ourselves. Wherever omissions are made, the editor has provided short summaries, so that the straight narrative is preserved.

Ricardo Quintana (Wisconsin) has edited for the Modern Library a volume of eight 18th-century plays. Included are *Cato*, *Jane Shore*, *The London Merchant*, *The Conscious Lovers*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *Tom Thumb*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The Rivals*. This should be a valuable aid to undergraduate teachers. The Modern Library has also brought out a new abridgement of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, made by Bergen Evans (Northwestern).

Jim Osborn writes about David Green's *Blenheim Palace*, published by Country Life Press in 1951. As he points out, it is not very well known in the U.S.A. - for one reason, it costs six guineas - but it should be better known by 18th-century scholars. It is the story of the building of Blenheim, based on the archives still at the Palace, and describes all the changes in plans from the time Vanbrugh was first engaged. The story is dramatic, and one feels about the Palace almost as one would about the character in a play. There are illustrations and diagrams, and valuable appendices full of new information about important people of the day.

Iolo Williams's *Early English WaterColours* has now been published by *The Connoisseur* in London. It is essentially a work of reference for collectors, students, art historians, librarians, etc. Of the 412 illustrations only one is in color. The printed text runs to some 160,000 words.

Our readers should be amused by the 18th-century section, in particular, in Robert Manson Myers's spoof of histories of English literature, written in the manner of student boners. The book is called *From Beowulf to Virginia Woolf* and is published by Bobbs-Merrill.

Other recent volumes to be listed are: Francis Watson, *Daniel Defoe* (Men and Books Series); *Blundell's Diary and Letter-Book 1702-1728*, edited by Margaret Blundell; Charles B. Hogan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: 1701-1800* (O.U.P.); an edition of *Tom Jones* with illustrations by T.M. Cleland (Heritage Press); O.A. Sherrard, *Lord Chatham* (Bodley Head); V.C. Clinton-Baddeley, *The Burlesque Tradition in the English Theatre after 1860* (Methuen).

## The Heir of Douglas

Lovers of mystery stories, as well as most 18th-century enthusiasts will welcome Lillian de la Torre's (Mrs. George McCue of Colorado College) *The Heir of Douglas* (Knopf). As all of you know, or should know, the mystery of the paternity of Archibald Douglas was never completely settled in his own day. Was he, or was he not, heir to the great fortune of the Duke of Douglas? In aristocratic circles everyone took sides; England and Scotland, indeed, turned into two embattled camps. Boswell was a violent adherent of the claimant; others were as certain he was an impostor. And almost everyone of the day had his say. Lillian de la Torre thinks she can supply a convincing solution which satisfies all the conflicting evidence. But, of course, we wouldn't think of giving away her explanation. Read her book yourself and find out.

## Coming Books

For Johnsonians the event of the autumn season will be the publication, at last, of R.W. Chapman's edition of Johnson's letters. In three volumes, it will contain many more letters than did the two volumes of Birkbeck Hill, and the texts throughout will be much more accurate and authoritative. The set is promised by Clarendon for December.

We look forward to Jean H. Hagstrum's (Northwestern) *Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism* (Univ. of Minnesota Press), which has just been announced for fall publication.

Of particular interest to students of the drama will be Louis Kronenberger's *The Thread of Laughter: Chapters on English Stage Comedy from Jonson to Maugham* (Knopf). Witty, perceptive, and beautifully written it is sure to be. We will have more to say about it in our next.

McGraw-Hill is bringing out an edition of some hitherto unpublished papers of Sir Joshua Reynolds, largely in the Boswell collection at Yale. Ted Hilles is the editor. By those who have been privileged to read in manuscript Reynold's delightful character sketch of Goldsmith, the book has been eagerly awaited.

We hope soon to see a copy of B.H. Bronson's selections from Johnson in the inexpensive Rinehart series.

Other books which will soon appear are: Sir Tresham Lever, *Godolphin: His Life and Times* (Murray); H.M. Jones, *Hannah More*

(Cambridge); Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama 1680-1900* (Cambridge) - a revised, enlarged edition of earlier volumes, now issued as a series. The first three volumes deal with the Restoration, the early and late 18th century.

### Johnson Notes

A.L.Reade's *Consolidated Index to Persons to Parts I to X of his Johnsonian Gleanings*, as well as to the pertinent parts of *The Reades of Blackwood Hill*, is about ready for distribution. Running to 511 pages, it will be invaluable for all who wish to use his volumes. The price is two guineas, plus postage and packing (Address, Treleaven House, Blundellsands, Liverpool 23).

The Augustan Reprint Society has issued a facsimile of Thomas Tyers's *Biographical Sketch of Dr. Samuel Johnson* (1785), with an introduction by Gerald D. Meyer (U.C.L.A.). Not many scholars realize that Tyers's sketch was expanded and corrected after its original appearance in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and later was separately printed. The author's own copy of this separate publication (now in the Columbia University Library), with further holograph annotations, has been used for the present facsimile. Since G.B. Hill in his *Johnsonian Miscellanies* reprinted the earlier, shorter version, all Johnsonians will welcome this issue by the Augustan Reprint Society. Copies may be secured from the Clark Library, 2205 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles 18, Calif.

Early this fall Hastings House in New York will publish *Dr. Johnson's Lichfield* by Mary Alden Hopkins. More about that in our next number.

Ned McAdam (N.Y.U.) writes that he has made separate card entries for all the books ever known to have been owned by Dr. Johnson - those listed in the catalogue of his library and others which have since turned up. McAdam adds that he will be glad to answer any short enquiries about the books, if accompanied by a self-addressed post card. We are certain he would also welcome any additions to his list.

From W.R.Batty in England comes a clipping from the *London Times* of March 17 commemorating the 200th anniversary of the death of "Tetty." It is entitled "The Love Match of Dr. Johnson."

There is a discussion of Johnson's ideas in Nicholas Joost, "Poetry and Belief: Fideism from Dryden to Eliot" in the *Dublin*

Review for First Quarter 1952. Other Johnsonian articles to be listed are: "Boswell, Johnson and the Bagshawe Muniments" in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* for March; James Allison, "Joseph Warton's Reply to Dr. Johnson's 'Lives'" in *JEGP* for April; Edward Hart, "The Contributions of John Nichols to Boswell's *Life of Johnson* in *PMLA* for June; Arthur Sherbo, "Johnsoniana: an Obituary Notice and an 'Abstract' from the *Life of Savage*" in *N&Q* for February 2, and "Dr. Johnson and 'Topsel on Animals': a Conjecture" in *N&Q* for March 15.

We have recently had the privilege of reading two excellent doctoral dissertations not written at our own university, which we hope will soon be in print. One is entitled "Samuel Johnson's Parliamentary Reporting: Debates in the Senate of Lilliput" and is the work of Benjamin B. Hoover at the University of California (Berkeley). Hoover proves conclusively the importance of the Debates as genuine creative work. The other dissertation is by Marshall Waingrow of Yale, who has edited certain correspondence of Boswell which show how he secured information for the *Life of Johnson*. Not only do the letters provide additional evidence about Johnson which Boswell failed to use, but they are invaluable in showing how Boswell handled his source material.

Further Johnsonian articles are: D.J. Greene, "Was Johnson Theatrical Critic of the *Gentleman's Magazine*?" *RES* for April 1952; Roger McCutcheon, "Johnson and Dodsley's *Preceptor*, 1748" in *Tulane Studies in English*, Vol. III (1952); Vedder M. Gilbert, "Altercations of Thomas Edwards with Samuel Johnson" in *JEGP* for July; a series of notes by Arthur Sherbo in *N&Q*: "The Text of Johnson's 'Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland': 'Bayle' or 'Boyle'?" April 26; "The Text of 'The Vanity of Human Wishes'," May 10; "Dr. Johnson Quotes One of His Amanuenses," June 21; "The Translation of Mottoes and Quotations in Johnson's 'Rambler,'" June 21. There was an anonymous general essay "Johnson's Little Burney" in *TLS* for June 13.

In the most recent *New Rambler* of the Johnson Society of London there are two interesting articles: Robert Metzdorf, "Thackeray and Johnson"; and E.S. de Beer, "Macaulay on Croker, Boswell, and Johnson" (an abridged version of a talk given to the society last autumn). Three other references sent on from England are: "Dr. Johnson an Imaginary Portrait," *The Book Collector* for Summer 1952; Rosemary Meynell, "Johnsonian Mysteries in Derbyshire" in *Derby-*

shire Countryside for July-Sept.; and Roy Christian, "Johnson's Lichfield" in *Coming Events in Britain* for Sept.

### A Few Recent Articles

This time we mention only a few articles from periodicals you may not ordinarily see: George Sherburn, "The Duchess Replies to the King," *Harvard Library Bulletin* for Winter 1952, which describes the quarrel of the Duchess of Queensberry and George II over John Gay; William B. Todd, "Concurrent Printing: an Analysis of Dodsley's Collection of Poems by Several Hands," in *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* for First Quarter 1952, and "The Bibliographical History of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*," in *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* (Oxford), for Sept. 1951; W. H. Graham, "Oliver Goldsmith," in *Contemporary Review* for May 1952; R. B. McDowell, "Some Fitzgibbon Letters from the Sneyd Muniments in the John Rylands Library," in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* for March. Also in this issue is a description of some documents having to do with Rousseau in England.

An article which impinges on eighteenth-century critical theory is W. K. Wimsatt's "The Substantive Level," in *Sewanee Review* for October 1951.

### Further Recent Articles

Concerned with Dryden are: Reuben A. Brower, "An Allusion to Europe; Dryden and Tradition" in *ELH* for March 1952; James Kinsley, "Dryden's 'Character of a Good Parson' and Bishop Ken" in *RES* for April.

There are a number of discussions of Swift which we have not yet mentioned: "Ellen Douglass Leyburn, "Swift's Language Trifles" in *HLQ* for February; Robert C. Elliott, "Gulliver as Literary Artist" in *ELH* for March; Harold D. Kelling, ""Gulliver's Travels: a Comedy of Humours" in *University of Toronto Quarterly* for July; R. C. Olson, "Swift's Use of the *Philosophical Transactions* in Section V of *A tale of a Tub*" in *SP* for July; Irvin Ehrenpreis, "The Date of Swift's 'Sentiments'" in *RES* for July; Maurice Johnson, "Swift's Renunciation of the Muse" in *N&Q* for May 24.

Generally concerned with the early part of the century are: Jonathan Bishop, "Knowledge and Action in Defoe's Novels" in *JHI*

for January; H. Bunker Wright, "Ideal Copy and Authoritative Text: the Problem of Prior's *Poems on Several Occasions*" in *MP* for May; David S. Berkeley, "The Penitent Rake in Restoration Comedy" in *MP* for May; John Harrington Smith, "Thomas Baker and the *Female Tattler*" in *MP* for February; Marjorie Williams, "An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence" (Bolingbroke and his sister) in *English* for Summer 1952; W.H. Wiatt, "A Note on Addison's *Upholsterer*" in *N&Q* for May 24; Robert D. Spector, "Pope's Reputation as a Deist" in *N&Q* for July 19; Arthur Pollard, "'The Rape of the Lock' III, 155-58" in *N&Q* for Aug. 16.

Having to do with later writers are: W.R. Irwin, "William Kenrick: Volunteer Moralist" in *PMLA* for March; John D. Yohannan, "The Persian Fad in England 1770-1825" in *Comparative Literature* for Spring 1952; R.C. Boys, "Tristram Shandy and the Conventional Novel" in *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters* 1951 (1952); Ernest Dilworth, "Sterne: Some Devices" in *N&Q* for April 12; Thomas W. Copeland, "Burke's First Patron" in *History Today* for June 1952; Andrew M. Wilkinson, "The Decline of English Verse Satire in the Middle Years of the Eighteenth Century" in *RES* for July; Robert Manson Myers, "Handel and Milton" in *Tulane Studies in English* (1952); Philip H. Highfill, Jr., "The Columbian Magazine" *University of Rochester Library Bulletin* for Spring 1952; Michael Barrington, "The Prince of Connoisseurs: Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill" in *N&Q* for June 7; P.M. Zall, "Peter Pindar 'Redivivus'" in *N&Q* for July 19.

### Late Notes

Just at the last minute an important new book has reached us — Ian Jack's (Brasenose College, Oxford) *Augustan Satire: Intention and Idiom in English Poetry 1680-1750*, published by the Clarendon Press. Included are studies of "Hudibras," "MacFlecknoe," "Absalom and Achitophel," "The Rape of the Lock," Pope's "Moral Essays," "The Dunciad," "The Vanity of Human Wishes," together with some conclusions about Augustan preoccupation with "proper language." Jack's chief interest is rhetorical, in relating the poems to the critical theory of the time, and in analyzing idiom and style. More of this in our next.